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INVITATIONAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP ON RESTRUCTURED AND ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

FINAL REPORT

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for an Invitational Research Workshop on *Restructured and Alternative Learning Environments* developed from a prior conference hosted by the Stay-in-School program of the Youth Affairs Branch, Employment and Immigration, Canada. That conference, held in St. Andrews, New Brunswick in August of 1991, identified a number of themes that required further attention if secondary education in Canada were to be more effective. One theme concerned research on what makes some high schools and programs more effective than others.

Following up on this conclusion, those responsible for the Stay-in-School program, including Virginia Miller, Helen Hackett, and Tom Tidey, and those associated with the Innovations Program of Employment and Immigration, Canada, including John Greenwood and Dick Harvey, met with Steve Lawton, Andy Hargreaves, Ken Leithwood, and Mark Holmes, from The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education to explore several possibilities. The outcome was this workshop.

Key people in arranging the workshop for whom thanks are also due are Elaine Tanenzapf, Executive Secretary in the Department of Educational Administration and the staff at the Sutton Place Hotel in Toronto. Of particular importance to the completion of this report were the notes and summary prepared by Doris Jantzi, who served as the conference reporter.

Finally, special thanks are due to the participants who gave of their time to attend and contribute to the workshop.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INVITATIONAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP ON RESTRUCTURED AND ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

June 11 and 12, 1992
Sutton Place Hotel
Toronto, Ontario

Purpose of Workshop. The primary aim of the workshop was to develop a research agenda on learning environments for late adolescents--roughly ages 16 to 20. Most of these youth will have completed their compulsory years of education and will be undertaking some form of further learning, in or out of school.

Organization of Workshop. Twenty-six individuals, including four from Employment and Immigration Canada, were invited from across Canada to share ideas and insights on the topic of restructured and alternative learning environments (Appendix I). Participants were drawn primarily from ministries/departments of education and academic institutions, although most had experience at various levels of the elementary/secondary system. A principal from a large high school offering an restructured, outcome-based program was also included. Care was taken to include individuals knowledgeable about gender, ethnocultural, and related issues. Submissions in French were sought and francophones were included, although simultaneous translation was not available.

The workshop agenda (Appendix II) was structured around the following five questions:

- What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?
- What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?
- What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?
- What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?
- How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

Participants were requested to submit preliminary answers to these questions (Appendix III). This activity served several purposes: it ensured that participants had taken time to reflect on the topic before their arrival, it provided written material that could be shared among members of the group, and it ensured conference outcomes would include viewpoints that might not endorsed by the group as a whole.

Summary of Discussions

The summary of discussion that follows describes both the proceedings as they occurred and the main conclusions that were reached.

Thursday Evening, June 11, 1992:

The workshop began with an official welcome by the workshop convenor, Steve Lawton, followed by introductions of all participants.

Sam Lim from the British Columbia Ministry of Education presented his view of the nature of the problem under consideration by summarizing what he saw as two key aspects. He first suggested that it is necessary to get a practical perspective on expectations for education, to get a focus on what we are trying to do in the schools. We should reach for agreement on the goals and the means of achieving them. He made reference to the Economic Council and the Conference Board reports as well as the Stay-in-School initiative as addressing the practical aspects of the problem. The second dimension of the problem requiring attention is what Lim referred to as the "socio-political context." He said that we need at strong social agenda to build the "social capital" we need that will include developing lifelong learning themes. This will require stronger linkages between school systems and with the larger society. The socio-political context requires addressing equity issues. Lim concluded by stressing the need for a balance between the utilitarian and social agendas with the development of processes that will allow us to merge the agendas of different interest groups to develop a series of goals dealing with both the practical and the equity issues.

Following Lim's presentation there was discussion about the emergence of community schools as providing for better linkages, particularly for special students. Lim indicated that new schools within B.C. were given start-up time with the school administration in place a year before opening. It was pointed out that new schools have a particularly difficult time in establishing culture and structure simultaneously. Conventional theories of change do not provide adequately for "educational creation."

Jan Eaton from Dalhousie University defined the problem for education within the shift toward globalization. She characterized the problem as requiring a move from the institutional/factory model of education to new models reflecting new visions, goals and structures. Analysis of global change and its impact on schooling is a necessary part of model building. School and community cooperation will be a key factor in new models. The emergence of a new political culture that is moving from representative to participatory will also have an impact on schooling, requiring the involvement of youth in the discussion about new models. Eaton suggested that the curriculum will need to move to a more transformational or holistic approach with emphasis on experiential learning strategies. The traditional system is under threat, for example, privatization is a preferred response of some groups to the failings of the current system. Eaton proposed that a "transdisciplinary" curriculum could provide a more relevant education. For example, we need to explore how technology is driving change. The changing school and economic trends require a major paradigm shift for educators.

The discussion following Eaton's presentation dealt with such issues as the need to look at cultural differences within the move toward globalization. There was agreement that we are not working toward building a single paradigm and that, as a minimum, there are differing global and local paradigms. Historical analysis is a necessary part of paradigm development. North America no longer controls the global agenda and, thus, reform will be dictated at least in part by external forces. The

pressures for change are causing some people to retreat into traditional society, perhaps contributing to greater tribalism as peoples react to the post modern era. The extent to which cultural continuity overrides the apparent move to tribalism remains a question.

John Wiens of Manitoba School Division No. 10 said the current reports (e.g., Economic Council and Conference Board) on the status of Canadian education suggest simplistic solutions for difficult problems. Any solution will need to involve the people directly affected in the process of developing solutions. Because education is learning how to live better in the world where you are, young people need to know where they belong in society. Education is how we make sense of our world and does not exist outside the human being . A current, pervasive myth is that the economy would be fixed if schools were doing their job right. Preparing students for high tech jobs is not enough; other jobs will still be there. Business wants 'good' people, not necessarily those trained in state-of-the-art technology. The educators' response to the myth should be to dialogue with students and listen to their histories about school. The alienation expressed by youth today can be addressed through community schools and other initiatives such as integrated community services. According to Wiens, because people lack belief in institutions we need to rebuild a sense of belonging.

Thursday evening's discussion concluded with some thoughts on the nature of the emerging economy and the linkage between education and business. Currently there appears to be broad support for projects in which business and government cooperate. Business is seen to be interested in broader issues. Members of the business community are perceived to be well-informed and beginning to see the need for a more balanced view of educational expectations. Discussions need to take place from a strong philosophical base taking into account all aspects of the person. These discussions can be informed by critiques of modernity (e.g., Taylor). It was suggested that we need to develop a common voice across the educational community.

Friday morning, June 12, 1992; Plenary Session:

On Friday morning participants formed three groups for discussion of the questions providing the focus for the workshop. The morning's discussions within the small groups were reported to the conference before the break for lunch.

Group 1: This group agreed that a conception of the educational problem as keeping kids in school is too narrow. Rather, the problem is to provide meaningful educational experiences for students. It is necessary to define the problems broadly enough to allow for broader solutions.

The goals for education should examine the roles of business, of parents and of students in the educational process. Goals should be broad -- global and not just a local in focus.

The educational means require the design of authentic tasks, with the emphasis on the authenticity of educational tasks. As well, educational experiences should have closer links to the community.

Group 1 began to explore promising examples of new structures such as the Mary Ward Secondary School in Toronto.

Group 2: This group examined issues that shape the context for change, including French language, gender, ethno-cultural, and First Nations. They talked about the need to develop understanding across points of view, recognizing the complexity across groups. There was a concern about not becoming too blended in our thinking processes. From a recognition of the context for change comes the need for awareness of these differences that contributes to consensus or a common understanding of the need for change. This awareness occurs only through discussion sustained over time and not only through discrete forums. Strategies developed to address educational problems need to be informed, responsive

to the communities affected and sustained by continued dialogue. The role of research is one of action grounded in best practice.

Group 3: This group defined the nature of the problem as the changing social context of learning. The dimensions of these changes can be examined in theoretical literature; economic, demographic, and labor market data interpretations; trends and futurology literature.

Exploration of alternative institutional environments was proposed as a research strategy. The first task would be to identify appropriate sites which would then be described in detail. An attempt should be made to identify the significant outcomes, experiences and effects of the alternative institutions. Two key features of these environments that must be explored are: (a) their sustainability over time (what is the effect on teachers' working lives? is there teacher burnout?) and (b) their replicability across space in other settings (do the sites have special privileges? are they protected from constraints?). Between 6 and 12 sites might be a reasonable sample for this research.

Another research focus would be alternative system environments to gain an understanding of how systems crossing schools could function to be more responsive to the current problems in education. Again, 2 or 3 systems would be identified. If the resources were available there could be an attempt to construct a new system or intervene in an existing one. The possibility of describing or evaluating the system environment should be pursued.

A fourth aspect this group's proposal was the suggestion that conscious effort be made to have the research influence policy. It was suggested that portraits of alternative environments be prepared using the stories of the participants in the research sites as well as statistics and rational arguments on which the portraits are based.

Following the presentation from the small groups additional points were raised within the plenary session. How does governance affect the context discussed by group 2? Supreme Court decisions do have an impact, as do media portrayals of issues. The formal governance structure may not facilitate informed response to problems voiced by those outside the structure.

It was suggested that it is necessary to bring together not only the rational and emotional arguments as noted by group 3, but also the pragmatic must be included.

Strategic planning was seen to be a critical factor. The lack of restructured environments (group 3) within Canada may necessitate looking beyond our borders for exemplary cases that could then be used to put together our own models. The public must be brought together around the proposed portraits, which must include the reasoned arguments.

A distinction was made between the type of research which starts with existing phenomena and explores where we are going and that which models the future and works backwards to how such schools might be structured.

There was a reminder that an important factor in restructuring is funding and that the current, severe fiscal restraint is a critical contextual factor. Education will need to be rationalized like industry has been to be more cost effective. Someone suggested that we could look to some examples in developing countries for how to function in a diminishing economy.

Other aspects of the context related to minority issues were seen as systemic problems within the country. Such issues won't be resolved without greater empowerment of the minorities.

It was also reported that some issues related to contextual factors discussed in group 2 did not reach consensus. For example, are things defined as 'problems' or 'ways of being?' What is the meaning of 'talk' and what kind of leadership is most appropriate? How necessary is it to define important differences as identifiers? What is the role of 'voice', particularly for the marginalized?

Finally, there was a question about how teachers fit into the model given that they are the vehicle for change.

Following the lunch break, the small groups were convened for another hour of discussion before all participants met in plenary for the last session.

Friday afternoon, June 12, 1992; Plenary Session:

The workshop deliberations were summarized in the following eight-point model:

I Pragmatic

There was agreement that a pragmatic approach must be retained in the model with examination of existing exemplary practice.

II Radical

At the same time as existing practice is reviewed there needs to be a openness to new directions and experimentation in different settings. The necessity for "missions" to guide new practice was expressed. We need to know more about what students learn in different environments. For example, what do part-time jobs contribute to learning and how can part-time jobs be legitimized as learning environments?

III Theoretical

We need to explore alternative educational designs. This includes tasks such as looking at the global picture. Global scanning must be linked to a goal system. Goals shift as society shifts so it becomes essential that we look at how goals relate to future trends. This also requires an understanding of how goals serve different communities. Another aspect of the theoretical is the cognitive science perspective particularly as it relates to use of the computer in the learning environment. Managing the computer environment is critical design task.

IV Community and Education

As the learning setting is expanded to include the broader community it may require broadening our understanding of educational goals and criteria. The process may involve employers in defining goals and criteria. Various learning sites include the family, community and workplaces. The work in which students engage may be paid or voluntary. In addition to alternative sites, there are alternative learnings such as leadership skills or wilderness experiences.

V Assessment and Outcomes

Knowledge, skills and values are equally important outcomes. Outcome measures need to be reflective of diverse goals.

VI Learners

While the focus is on the learner, the roles of others in the learning process must be addressed. A number of advisors in a non-authoritarian mode could be of great help to educators. The educational agendas for learners include part-time work, leisure, school, and social relationships. The social agenda includes the role of minorities in the process.

VII Pathways

There is a need to explore the broadest range of pathways to employment, not only the mainstream pathways. Connections must be made with other agencies in the community. Roles much be redefined and the diversity of contexts recognized. Because people are working in parallel, greater effort must be made to share findings from our different contexts that point to alternative pathways. In particular we need to give more thought to learning pathways outside school.

VIII Federal Role

The federal initiative is timely in bringing all the components together, particularly for minorities. There is a clear need for a national research policy. Longitudinal data should be collected to provide a much-needed data base. The data base would be broadened to include more anecdotal data as suggested by the idea of portraits.

Closing Comments

The plenary concluded with additional reflections by participants. There was a discussion about examples of alternatives in other countries. The U.K. example was provided as a caution that a multiplicity of recent trends and new policies without a clear rationale can lead to policy overload. New Zealand is introducing new technological schemes and B.C. is looking at creating alternative pathways.

Within Canada discussions about new training strategies have been going on at the federal and provincial levels. For example, the Job Futures initiative tries to project trends and look at where post-secondary graduates go. There is less attempt to move to lower levels of training.

The approach to training is sector oriented with business and labour involved in decisions about training directions. For example, CARS was consulted in setting the criteria for training. Also, plastics

industries have their own training criteria and have been working with colleges to establish programmes. There is a great need to build public awareness of what is going on in training. There needs to be an exercise in public education with the training aspect in the forefront.

The difficulty of communicating on a national level was acknowledged but the necessity for better linkage makes it imperative that new ways be found to share information. A new, trans-institutional structure needs to be put in place and a language for public discourse about educational alternatives needs to be developed. The concept of a cross-country consortium should be considered.

The workshop ended with this appeal for building new communication linkages among educational researchers and between educators and the public.

APPENDIX I

Participants

Last	First	Title	Organization	Address	City	Province	Postal Co
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APPENDIX II

Agenda

INVITATIONAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP ON RESTRUCTURED AND ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Sutton Place Hotel, Toronto
June 11-12, 1992

AGENDA

Thursday, June 11

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Registration	Amsterdam Room
5:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Reception	Amsterdam Room
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Dinner	Amsterdam Room
7:30 - 9:00 p.m.	Conversation and Discussion ***Problems Faced By Youth Aged 16 to 20 In Canada***	Vienna Room

Friday, June 12

8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	Amsterdam Room
8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Defining the Task: Overview and Discussion	Vienna Room
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Small Groups Discussion: ***The Problem and Initiatives in Canada*** (see small group list and collated responses)	Vienna Room
10:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Coffee Break	
10:15 - 11:00 a.m.	Small Groups Discussion: ***Possible Initiatives*** (see collated responses)	Vienna Room
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	Plenary Session	Vienna Room
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch	Amsterdam Room
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Small Groups Discussion: ***Assigning, Selecting and Evaluating Initiatives to Restructure and Develop Learning Environments***	Vienna Room
2:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Group Reports, Discussion and Conclusion: ***Framework for a Research and Action Agenda***	Vienna Room

APPENDIX III

Preliminary Submissions

Antoine Baby
Université Laval

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

Les 16 - 18 ans constituent de nos jours un groupe stratégique pour le système éducatif, car c'est à cette période que se concrétise ou non l'accès au diplôme du secondaire et que, considérant l'importance de l'abandon scolaire, se vivent les premiers contacts directes avec le monde du travail ou, à défaut, avec les programmes d'assistance publique.

Ce qui rend la situation problématique, c'est l'importance de l'abandon scolaire (36% au Québec) dans un contexte social et économique de plus en plus complexe qui génère des exigences de scolarisation accrue. Il importe d'établir que le système d'éducation doit définir sa norme de réussite en regard de l'accès du plus grand nombre au diplôme d'études secondaires. Bref, il s'agit d'assurer la réussite scolaire des 16 - 18 ans.

Plusieurs questions se posent alors à nous:

- Comment permettre un raccrochage scolaire qui mène à une diplômation?
- Comment éviter le décrochage?
- Comment prendre en considération les modes d'apprentissage différenciés des jeunes?
- Comment concilier la poursuite de la scolarisation et l'attrait des jeunes pour le marché du travail?
- Que proposer à celles et à ceux qui malgré tout font le choix d'abandonner l'école? L'école a-t-elle une responsabilité à leur égard?
- Doit-on revoir le curriculum du secondaire? Correspond-il à la réalité des jeunes, à leurs besoins?

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

L'inventaire des pratiques favorisant la réussite scolaire dans les écoles primaires et secondaires du Québec, réalisé par le CRIRES, met en évidence qu'il se fait beaucoup de choses pour favoriser la réussite scolaire des 16 - 18 ans: centre de raccrocheurs, classe pour raccrocheurs, programmes d'insertion sociale et professionnelle, formation en alternance, voies technologiques, classes passerelles, etc. Pourtant, nous avons étée frappés par la dispersion des efforts, le peu d'intégration des approches, l'absence d'évaluation des pratiques. Bref, il se fait

beaucoup de choses et il reste beaucoup à faire. Mais, on a déjà à la portée de la main un vaste bassin d'expériences qui ne demande qu'à livrer ses acquis, ses secrets. C'est là une des missions foundamentales du CRIRES, qui constitue, à sa façon, une manière de contribuer à la résolution du problème.

Le CRIRES représente avant tout un partenariat structurè entre le milieu de la recherche et les intervenantes et intervenants de première ligne du monde de l'éducation. C'est la combinaison de la recherche fondamentale, de la recherche appliquée, de l'intervention et de l'expérience pratique au service d'un objectif: la réussite scolaire.

Nous penson qu'il est important de tirer des leçons de l'expérience des centres de raccrochage et les pratiques de raccrochage existantes. C'est, d'ailleurs, l'objet du travail d'une équipe du CRIRES.

Nous travaillons aussi à mesurer l'intérêt que peut représenter une approche fondée sur la formation pratique, telle que favorisée par le programme "insertion sociale et professionnelle du MEQ".

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

Il importe en particulier de souligner l'expérience francaise qui a notamment insisté sur le projet école centré sur la participation et la concertation (réf. travaux du CRESAS - Centre de recherche de l'éducation spécialisée et de l'adaptation scolaire). C'est d'ailleurs une autre préoccupation de recherche du CRIRES.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

Un soutien concret aux initiatives de recherches fondées sur un partenariat avec les intervenantes et intervenants du monde de l'éducation, y incluant le financement de l'infrastructure de recherche.

Favoriser aussi l'intervention et l'évaluation des pratiques.

Favoriser la diffusion des résultats vers les intervenantes et les intervenants de première ligne en diversifiant les modes de diffusion. Prévoir des ressources strictement à cette fin (ref. à l'inventaire des ressources universitaires où il y a peu d'activités de diffusion).

Développer aussi la rechoerche et l'intervention pour une approche préventive dés le préscolaire.

George Dei
Department of Sociology in Education
OISE

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

The necessity and challenge to make education serve the needs of our increasingly diverse, multi-ethnic community. Also, an increasing awareness that we live in a 'global village' requires that Canada's education be geared towards preparing our students to cope with the ensuing national and international challenges.

Today, there is an alienation of our youths arising from the fact that the educational system is not preparing students to deal with the complex concerns/problems of a changing society. That, 'traditional' education is not equipping the youth with the requisite skills and opportunities to contribute meaningfully towards the rebuilding of Canadian society in the least.

The dropout problem in our high schools only reinforce the view that the school has continually been a site for the reproduction of the inequities in our society. How do we change and/or respond to the situation? (Here, I am reminded by the cry of one parent: "Our kids are at risk both on the streets and in the classrooms. How can we save them before it is too late?).

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

I can only comment on my current area of research interest dealing with the dropout phenomenon in the schools. I am aware of the Federal Government's 'Stay in School' initiative through the Minister of State for Youth and the Conference Board of Canada. This initiative is exploring ways business, government and education leaders can work together to help students stay in school. (To my knowledge there is no emphasis on parents.)

Also, other emerging initiatives in the schools are recognizing the need for alternative and non-exclusionary educational perspectives for informing a multi-ethnic, pluralistic society. Specifically, some educators within the Canadian school system are questioning the Eurocentricity of Canadian schooling and education in various ways and on diverse pedagogical platforms. Both at the level of theory and praxis, there is an on-going critical examination of some of the major concepts in the social sciences, humanities and the arts for their applicability (or otherwise) to non-mainstream groups. (This is a healthy sign.)

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

The African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE) based in Kenya has set out initiatives aimed at addressing concerns not completely dissimilar to the challenges facing Canada. AALAE has been involved in the exploration of alternative forms of schooling and education for some African countries (e.g., Kenya). The initiatives of AALEA are informed by the emerging critique of the tendency to take for granted the current distorted demands of the national economy, as well as the structural changes in the international economic system and to seek to adjust the supply of labour accordingly.

A few African countries (Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Ghana) at various points in their post-independent histories have grappled with the idea of 'Education for Self-reliance', 'Education for Relevance'. The emphasis (at least in theory) is on 'practical' education that is relevant to the needs of the respective societies and which will equip the individual with some added sense of social responsibility.

In a few countries there is a slow, but gradual shift in emphasis from educational investment in sheer knowledge production to examining questions of educational equity, quality and relevance of curriculum and educational expansion.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

I would not go that far to say none of the following has been tried here. However, I would call for a rethinking of the issues with renewed commitment to their eventual effective implementation and assessment of outcomes:

a. developing new strategies for co-op education (that does not simply gloss over issues of individual differences and capabilities) and group learning (with reduced emphasis on individual culpability, self-learning and competitiveness among students).

b. developing ways for parents and community groups to have an increased say or a more meaningful role in the running of the schools.

c. 'bringing the school the community' in terms of educational research and field development, and making each constituency (i.e., community and school) responsive to each other. For example, schools must take up and address the issues identified by their respective communities as of utmost concern to them. Also, the schools must develop more effective ways to reach out to the community, particularly those kids who the schools and the communities definitely appear to be losing.

d. improving upon the educational equity and/or accessibility of the underrepresented groups in society, and bringing all those currently existing on the margins/peripheries of our educational system to the centres.

e. schools must develop meaningful, positive and mutually beneficial partnerships with parents, and community groups (including business groups and the media) without necessarily sacrificing the goals of educational accessibility to all and the ideals of intellectual freedom, social justice and fairness.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

I would respond to this question with a reference to what I think is a pressing issue for examination. The idea here is that an understanding of the impact of the economic restructuring of Canadian society for various segments of our population should provide educators and policymakers with some clues as to what direction they should be taken in the restructuring and creation of alternative learning environments:

Project: National Economic Restructuring and the Impact on Schooling in Canada.

An examination of the impact of state economic restructuring measures on schooling at the micro-level of local communities in Canada. Specifically, to examine the impact on schooling of some of the economic restructuring measures such as the retrenchment of workers, restraints on wages and government expenditures, reduction of budgetary deficits through cutbacks on social services and transfer payments to schools, school fee increases, privatization of state enterprises and the general rationalization of the public sector economy.

How is the problem perceived among different groups (e.g., race, ethnic, gender) within the schools and the community? What meanings do individuals, families and groups give to the economic restructuring taking place in Canada and how it is impacting on their lives and opportunities within the schools?

What are the differential impact(s) of economic restructuring (if any) on groups in society, particularly regarding the issue of educational equity?

Using a focus group for in-depth study (e.g., the Black, Chinese community) what are the processes of adjusting to the impact(s) of state economic restructuring on schooling (e.g., the micro-level specificities of family, group and community 'coping' strategies)?

How do the questions of gender, ethnicity and community-based actions influence economic survival and the impact on schooling in a Canadian community?

How do these micro-level issues inform our understanding of the macro-level problem of the impact of national economic restructuring on schooling in Canada?

Janet Eaton
School of Education
Dalhousie University

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

I'm not sure that the age category selected is appropriate. Restructuring the traditional high school environment would require us to deal with 15 to 17 or 18 year-olds.

Many recent government and business reports have described the problems of educating Canadian youth 16 to 20 years of age in terms of what might be called the manifestations of a malfunctioning system: high drop-out rates, lack of basic skills in literacy and numeracy as evidenced by high degree of functional illiteracy in both high school drop-outs and graduates; lack basic skills for finding and holding down a job, failure to motivate and interest enough students in the sciences. In addition there is the recognition that schools are not providing the entrepreneurial requirements for a changing labor market which has seen the shift to small business and self-employment as the major generator of new jobs.

The recommendations for change in many of these reports seem to focus on the inefficiencies, lack of accountability and deficits in the present education system as the major causes of the problem and recommend a number of ways of correcting and improving on the existing system from standardized testing, and other accountability measures. The effective school movement has been one researched-based movement which has attempted to correct existing schools. In many countries partnerships between schools and community, business and parents have been seen as another way of assisting a failing system in need of new ideas, resources and support.

My own perception of the problem is one of a deeper malaise which comes from an established bureaucracy with an aging teacher and administrator population with frames of reference or paradigms of education which do not match the 3C's of the dramatic paradigm shift through which we are living; i.e., constant change, complexity and the new competitiveness. Our entire school system is in dramatic need of not just reform attempts which we have seen throughout the 80's but daring and challenging restructuring initiatives.

The problem of educating youth in Canada therefore must be framed within this context of educating for the new information age paradigm to guide new restructuring initiatives. That requires an understanding of the paradigm shift occurring and how that impacts on the new kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes that youth will require for survival in the broadest context i.e., personal, economic, social, cultural and now global survival.

Viewed within this broader framework for change the problem becomes one of inappropriate philosophical and theoretical bases, inappropriate methodologies, inappropriate structure presently characterized by synchronization, centralization, fragmentation, standardization, concentration and massification (i.e., bigger is better) in much of the existing system. These

factors dictate the present often inappropriate administration methods, physical structures, curriculum design and teaching methods.

In the words of Dr. Bernard Shapiro speaking at Dalhousie University School of Education "Innovations" workshop which the writer organized last fall: "We need not a common school but an uncommon school . . . the bureaucracies we've developed will cause the schools to be victims or problems not solutions. . . . we must break the system up . . . the State must find ways to allow a thousand flowers to bloom!"

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

Many of the current initiatives resulting from federal government and arms length agency initiatives are tackling parts of the picture e.g., the attempts to develop school business partnerships through Conference Board of Canada, Chambers of Commerce, SIS, provincial Ministries and individual school boards or districts is a needed change but only a small piece of the entire picture.

The national SIS initiatives are leading to the development of alternative learning environments for students who are not being served adequately by the current model for secondary education.

As for actual initiatives which are looking at more comprehensive approaches to restructuring learning sites for secondary education in Canada I am not aware of a lot of activity.

- A very few Canadians are involved with an international association for a change in education called International Movement Toward Educational Change (IMTEC).

- A few isolated experiments of restructuring around technology.

- Last year at Dalhousie I ran a two-workshop series on change and Innovation which examined two subjects: *Global Economic Restructuring and the Impact on Public School Policy* and *Restructuring Education*". The abstracts of these two workshops are available.

- In Nova Scotia, most school boards have seen the Joel Barker tape the *Business of Paradigms* which challenges people to examine their old paradigms and move on.

- The Council of Ministers of Education participate in the Committee for Educational Research and Innovation, of the OECD: two recent thrusts there have been Youth Enterprise and School Business Partnership themes. This would seem to be one major forum for innovation in public school policy.

- Some change is being led by individual school districts across the country but again in piecemeal fashion and must of it only occurring where Federal funding particularly SIS funds are supporting and facilitating change.

- There have been a plethora of conferences about change but few people in the system have the breadth of perspective, change orientation or leadership skills to facilitate the dramatic changes required.

- Canadian Foundation for Economic Education initiatives around entrepreneurial education / video series / MOE curriculum materials.

- Canadian Satellite Learning Systems is attempting to bring entrepreneurship and innovative programming to schools through satellite transmission.

- Policy initiatives — consists of major reports by most provincial governments to ensure that schools address major problems of a malfunctioning system as well as to encourage new initiatives to address the emerging needs of global competitiveness. Nova Scotia's economic strategy *Our Common Future* parallels some of this emerging thought on education. I co-chaired the HRD Task Group of this Economic Strategy Team, and the process of monitoring and renewal is on-going with a meeting June the 12th. Similar papers, reports etc. have emerged from private business sector associations such as the Canadian Manufacturer's Association, the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology, the Conference Board of Canada, the Economic Council of Canada, etc.

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

United States:

- US Federal government passes entitlement acts from time to time releasing federal dollars for research on a range of concerns from community involvement in education to parent involvement, to youth initiatives, community education and even restructuring. More significantly in relation to the restructuring theme it funds about six educational research laboratories across the country which are on the forefront of educational change. I know the director of the Mid Continent Educational Research Lab (MCREL) which deals with the largely rural mid west states through an Institute which I attended in Texas a couple of years ago. Last year I brought in a member of his research team to speak at the workshop I ran on Restructuring Education.

- The Community Education Network, the National Community Education Association, the National Community Education Centre and the Community Education Leader's Network has been on the forefront of research and development relating to changes in education which focus on school community linkages with parents, business, community agencies, community involvement in curriculum, etc. As part of that leader's network until 1991 I have had access to much information in these arenas of change for the latter part of the

1980's and attended annual week long leadership development Institutes which focused on change.

- The State Governors Association have been very active in passing legislation to address major needs within education.

- The Council of State Education Officers has been examining many new approaches to education over the past several years.

- The Effective Schools Movement.

- The Association for Experiential Education has produced some useful literature which provides rationale for and examples of alternative learning environments. I have been a member of this group for some time and am aware of some of their initiatives.

- The Youth Leadership Council — out of Colorado are leaders in Community Service Learning which in my opinion is an important concept for consideration in an overall context of restructuring.

- Recent initiatives from the Teachers' Federation in the US under Shankar's leadership working with the Bush administration to correct schools is looking to more tried and tested approaches like headstart type initiatives and broad community based integrated programming.

- A group that I have worked with which are leaders in school based management and parent involvement in education is the National Council for Citizen Involvement in Education.

- America 2000 — for Restructuring Rural Education considered that rural school would become the laboratories of restructuring in America.

United Kingdom:

- Major initiatives in Britain aimed at making communities and parents accountable for education while wresting control from local education authorities bears watching.

- Major initiatives over past 10 years in youth entrepreneurship — Canada YMCA YES program modelled on UK approaches.

- Young European Program for all high school aged youth to promote travel, adventure and entrepreneurship.

Europe:

- OECD is a major body to watch for new initiatives and innovations in education through their reports and conferences latest two *Towards an Enterprising Culture* and *School-Business Partnerships*. Canada could push for even more innovation and experimentation on that body.

- Various initiatives in 'enterprise development' across Europe. (I was involved two years ago as one of two Canadian respondents in an international video teleconference *Riding the Third Wave — Towards an Enterprising Culture* which consisted of an interview in London identified in an OECD report as leaders in youth enterprise developments in the UK and Europe.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

It is my perception that few if any real experiments in restructuring along the guidelines suggested in my introductory remarks have been tried nor should they be until a thorough examination of existing restructuring experiments throughout North America and Europe have been examined; and until the current round of SIS initiatives have been analyzed.

In order to be able to draw conclusions from these analyses a philosophical and goal framework for a new paradigm of education reflecting the future needs of our country, our planet, our communities and our citizens must be developed. We are currently approaching the problem in a piecemeal fashion without a vision or adequate goals for the future. One part of the goal structure is being restructured now; i.e., the recognition of a new global economic reality is shifting the economic goals for the education community to consider. We have been doing a good job of creating a vision of and awareness of the need to become more competitive. However in the words of Mr. David McCamus, co-chair of the Prosperity Initiative, speaking last week at Nova Scotia's Annual Meeting of Voluntary Planning Board, the citizens of Canada while aware of the need to be competitive, do not like the work competitive, and in addition they want a vision which is broader than competitiveness; i.e., they also want a participatory society and democracy and they want a sustainable society. In his words "Canadians would rather be poor and have a living environment than rich with a dead environment." These factors and others must become part of the restructuring of educational goals for our country.

To do this we need a common frame of reference through which to examine trends in the global paradigm shift. In other words we need a way for planning groups such as this research workshop group to come to some common understanding about the nature of change envisioned, to develop a common understanding of the magnitude of change and its impacts on society — political, social, cultural, the individual, the family, communities as well as economic implications. That framework then needs to be juxtapositioned with a framework of educational goals in particular economic, political, social, cultural and person. Some of the obvious areas where change is required are being addressed in a fragmented way. Some school jurisdictions are trying school-business partnerships, others are setting up alternative learning

environments for drop-outs, some are trying experiments with technology, others with community service learning but few if any are experimenting with real systemic change.

With a new comprehensive framework of goals, philosophies and theoretical approaches specified, the existing system, and present initiatives can be examined and new more system-wide changes can be planned.

In addition researchers and practitioners alike must be aware of the confusion and fragmentation which currently exists in educational theory and terminology which reflects that thinking. It is essential to review that confusing plethora of approaches and to relate them to current adult education theory on transformational learning, learning in a social context, etc., experiential learning theory, etc. It is important to examine educational methods which are informed by various schools of thought — behavioral, cognitive, transformational, transpersonal and to begin to identify areas where present methodologies are inappropriate for the new paradigm of learning and thinking required for a self-reliant population and society. One conclusion agreed on by all change agents in education is that the didactic, *sage on the stage* approach must shift to the *guide on the side* which demands changes in the theoretical basis and has dramatic implications for staffing, administration, scheduling, and self-directed learning through greater use of community resources and technology and apparent involvement.

A primary consideration in a time of constant and raped change must be relevancy of education which can only be achieved by relating learning to immediate needs, concerns and experience, and providing an understanding of the context for change and learning i.e., developing global perspective.

Once there is common understanding and agreement with the kinds of restructuring which may be required for meeting societal needs under the new paradigm, then a number of small scale restructuring experiments should be piloted across the nation with federal involvement. This could be provided through a second generation SIS or an integrated initiative through Secretary of State, EIC, IST initiatives in education and training which follow from the Prosperity Initiative and relevant arms length government agencies such as Conference Board of Canada, etc.

I had already begun to map out a proposal for a restructuring initiative in a rural Nova Scotia environment last fall but put that on hold until I could spend more time exploring the aspect of getting the entire community, and school staff to buy into a new paradigm of education. I am now researching that problem and am in the process of designing a model which assists workshop participants to understand global change and to see interrelationships between different aspects of society. My thinking on restructuring education and schools has been aided by the synergy which comes from my work on developing a new appropriate training model for unemployed in rural Nova Scotia within a community economic development framework.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

- This research group convened could be asked to come up with suggestions for a more formalized network of researchers in Canada whose primary interests and expertise is in restructuring in the broadest sense of comprehensive systemic change. This group should be linked to Council of Ministers initiatives, the Canadian School Trustees Association, the Canadian Association for Independent Schools, SIS, National Science and Technology Board, the International Movement for Educational Change (IMTEC), Teachers' Federations, Conference Board of Canada, etc. This would provide a broad based yet innovative on-going body to assess more integrated options for change.

- Provide relevant well-rationalized and conceptualized frameworks for change from which policies and programs originate. (See question 4 above for suggestions.)

- Make decisions based on an analysis which recognizes the shift from a scientific / mechanistic paradigm to a holistic / systemic paradigm. This is key — if we as researchers and policy makers fail to use this analysis we will probably fail to restructure our goals, philosophies, methods and organizational structures.

- Based on a common understanding of the paradigm shift, and the dire consequences of failing to shift our current ways of thinking, valuing and doing, we must dare to proceed with experiments across this country which can release us from an archaic industrial model which stifles creativity, innovation and enterprise development. We must release the ingenuity and energy of our people.

Since metaphors are one of the useful teaching techniques for anew holistic paradigm of education which places specific parts within the context of a meaningful whole I conclude with three metaphors which graphically depict my beliefs and understanding of the crucial issue facing not only our education system but mankind in general.

Those of us who are still *clinging to the wreckage* of the industrial paradigm must dare to let go and risk *riding the third wave* of change. Anything else is tantamount to *arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic* as it approached its fateful end in Canadian waters.

Denis Haché
Centre de Recherche en Education du Nouvel-Ontario

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

Le système d'éducation fait actuellement face à l'un de ses plus grands défis de réforme de son histoire et se doit de réagir à un environnement qui échappe à son contrôle. La crise constitutionnelle, la récession, la globalisation de l'économie et des marchés, les changements technologiques, l'avènement de nouveaux partenaires commerciaux, les déficits gouvernementaux, les revendications des autochtones et du multiculturalisme ne sont là que quelques composantes du nouvel environnement dans lequel la société évolue actuellement à un rythme accéléré. Afin de pouvoir relever tous ces défis de manière efficace le système d'éducation doit s'embarquer dans un projet majeur de réforme afin de préparer la jeune génération à un environnement nouveau et plus menaçant que le précédent.

Dans cet environnement plutôt incertain et imprévisible, la francophonie ontarieene doit relever le défi avec son propre bagage de problèmes, et ce que se soit dans un Canada renouvelé ou dans un pays fragmenté. Par exemple, le niveau élevé d'assimilation de la population, soit 33% (Recensement de 1986), ainsi que le taux d'analphabétisme qui est le double de la moyenne provinciale, le nombre élevé des décrocheurs scolaires, le faible taux de participation aux études postsecondaires, ainsi qu'un rendement scolaire ploutôt inquiétant en mathématiques et en sciences sont là des symptômes de problèmes graves. Les conséquences socio-économiques de telles situations, aussi bien pour la minorité que pour la majorité, devraient porter les gouvernements à la réflexion et surtout a l'action car le coût social et économique d'une quelconque inaction sera autrement plus élevé.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

La Charte des droits et libertés reconnait le droit des francophones à la gestion et au contrôle de leur éducation. L'analyse des réalisations des gouvernements provinciaux pendant les dix dernières années nous révèle un écart sérieux entre la réalité et le noble principle énoncé par l'article 23 de la Charte.

Depuis l'avènement de la loi sur les services en francais (Loi 8) en Ontario, l'on constate certaines initiatives étapistes de solution entamées par le gouvernement de l'Ontario. Plusieurs recherches et consultations ont été entreprises pour étudier la faisabilitéde mettre sur pieds des conseils scolaires homogènes francophones ainsi qu'un réseau de collèges communautaires. Jusqu'à date, quelques régions seulement ont pu se doter d'un conseil scolaire francophone soit Toronto, Ottawa-Carleton et Prescott-Russell et un seul collège communautaire francophone existe dans la région d'Ottawa.

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

La minorité francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick faisait face à des problèmes socio-économiques aussi sérieux et menaçants il y a quelques annés. Ce n'est que suite à une réforme sociale profonde touchant les secteurs de l'économie, de la taxation, de l'éducation que l'on à réussit a renverser ces tendances. Cette réforme qui date des années 60, procéda à l'institutionalisation de la langue, de la culture et des valeurs de la minorité en accordant à cette dernière le contrôle de ses propres intitutions éducationnelles telles que conseils scolaires, collèges communautaires et université. La mise en place d'un service parallèle francophone au sein du Ministère de l'éducation et des services juridiques et de santé à travers la province complétèrent le projet de société. Quelques décennies plus tard les bénéfices d'une telle action se font visiblement sentir dans les secteurs de l'économie, de la politique et de la vitalité éthnolinguistique par une contribution active de la minorité acadienne.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

Nous soutenons que le contrôle et la gestion par les francophones de leurs propres institutions sont des outils qui puissent permettre l'édification d'un projet de société capable d'amorcer une renaissance politique, économique, sociale et culturelle au sein de la minorite. Et ce n'est que par le biais de ces institutions homogènes francophones que les inégalités sociales, économiques, et culturelles seront éliminées. La réalisation de ce nouveau paradigme social n'est possible que dans le cadre d'un projet de société à l'échelle provinciale et nationale et requiert une volonté politique ferme et engagée a long terme. Dans un tel contexte, la minorité pourra participer, activement et à plain titre, aux changements qui s'annoncent tout en éliminant l'écart qui la sépare du reste de la population.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

Dans ce cas particulier il n'y a qu'une seule option car l'expérience passée nous démontre que les tentatives de solutions étapistes et atomistes mise en oeuvre par les gouvernements ne font qu'assurer le maintien du statu quo.

L'évaluation de la rentabilité d'une telle option doit se faire avec le cours des années par une recherche axée sur les résultats et rendements scolaires des étudiants francophones et leurs habilités et capacités de fonctionner au sein de la population ontarienne comme adultes. La formule néo-brunswickoise a démontrée son efficacité sur tous ces égards.

Linda LaRocque
University of Alberta

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

A perception held by some students is that secondary school programs are of minimal use in meeting their immediate and long term needs and expectations. Further, the organization of these programs, in distinct and separate disciplines and the manner in which they tend to be delivered, as teacher-directed instruction, appear to be ineffective for certain students.

Particular school policies appear to increase the risk of early school leaving for certain students. Policies relating to retention and attendance may encourage some students to drop out or to be dropped out of school.

There appears to be insufficient information about who is actually dropping out of school, who remains out and who drops back in to complete high school or receive training at other institutions.

There is limited information about what happens to dropouts after leaving school. The long term consequences of such actions need to be more clearly understood.

Many of the programs for "at risk" students appear to be locally developed and informally evaluated. Research of programs that are currently in place appears necessary.

Problems experienced by our education system are, to a large extent, a reflection of problems existing in our social and economic structures (Levin, 1992). Changes in our schools will not alleviate these problems.

There are a variety of views regarding the essential purpose of public education in Canada. Just as there are a variety of perceptions regarding the essential purpose of schooling, there are also a variety of plans for improving our school system.

Educational opportunities do not appear to be equally available for students who speak English or French as a second language, or for students possessing physical handicaps.

Literacy studies including the UNESCO Report, Adult Illiteracy in Canada (1983), the Southam Report, Literacy in Canada (1987), and the Statistics Canada survey of LSUDA (9189), suggest that our schools are not successful with all students who graduate. It appears that some students complete high school without having acquired basic literacy skills.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

The Edmonton Separate School District has taken initial steps in restructuring their secondary schools. Plans are currently being developed by representatives of the school district's Program Services Department and the University of Alberta in conjunction with several volunteer schools.

The literature suggests a number of initiatives that have been effective in a variety of educational programs such as literacy education. These include:

- A balance between the role of the learner and the instructor must be created where learners are active participants in the process of learning and in monitoring their own programs (Fagan, 1991).

- Community-based programs, especially for older students, such as apprenticeship training have been very successful as the community provides the students with various forms of support including financial, vocational, personal and cultural (Challis, 1991; Hirsch, 1991).

- Computer-assisted learning still appears to offer benefits to certain students in specific situations. Research has indicated that the use of computers has a motivating effect for students (Mellan, 1991; Scane, Guy and Wenstrom, 1992).

- A study of literacy programs for aboriginal peoples suggest that there must be an incorporation of culturally relevant materials and approaches (Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies, undated; Nahanee, 1991).

- A study that placed trained volunteer tutors in public schools to assist students with low reading ability indicated that the basis for change in academic performance was the development of self-worth and self-esteem (Pollard, 1991).

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

The OECD study (1992) summarized many of the remedial measures recommended for various industrialized countries

> These [economic] pressures call for more basic skills training in the workplace, more integration of work-related and non-work-related content, more support for participatory organizational models in both work and training, and closer ties to community organizations and other local interest groups. (p. 57)

In German (West) school system there is an early differentiation of students into various curricular tracts. The secondary schools offer out-of-school learning experiences, such as apprenticeships located in the local community (Hamilton, 1987). We are reminded by Hamilton that cultural and vocational differences between countries makes the adoption of the German vocational education and learning out-of school programs difficult.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

A survey of existing practices that have been successful with "at risk" students needs to occur. The findings from such a survey could then form the basis of a national directory.

It appears necessary to develop a clearer picture of school attendance. One suggestion is the development of a tracking system to monitor student enrollments, transfers, and dropouts between schools, school districts, and provinces.

Steve Lawton
Department of Educational Administration
OISE

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

- general programs are not rigorous, tend to bore students, and do not link to visions of the future life of youth, and are hence irrelevant.
- dropout rates and alienated in-school students probably comprise over half the student body.
- career-linked programs are more common in areas traditionally associated with women — preparation for secretarial, clerical work.
- even community colleges have very high dropout rates.
- changes in employment opportunities in urban areas mean that finding employment that pays a living wage is increasingly difficult for those who are not highly educated or very skilled.
- many service sector jobs may not be recognized in the formal curriculum at all.
- in rural areas, decline and threatened decline of farming and resources industries presents even greater problems, in some ways, in that it may be more difficult to build a reasonable vision of the future that would keep youth in school.
- some groups, such as native people and some immigrant communities, may be especially vulnerable.
- in spite of employment equity, international competition means employers will avoid hiring poor trained youth of visible minority backgrounds because to do so threatens their competitiveness.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

- articulation agreements between high schools and community colleges
- intervention programs to assist least skilled in becoming more employable and to improve basic skills

- individualized secondary school curriculum that allows individuals to move at their own pace.

- some school-business partnerships, but these tend to be idiosyncratic and difficult to envision on a large scale; business cannot guarantee jobs for current let alone future employees.

- many youth work part-time while in school, but school and work compete rather than complement; these jobs tend to be low paid.

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

- new national technical / vocational schools in Britain.

- co-op education programs for all levels; these are popular, but may not be effective.

- proposals from Center on Education and the Economy in United States to require basic mastery certificate after grade 10 and career oriented "apprenticeship" education thereafter; program has been adopted by Oregon.

- advanced placement of high school youth in community colleges.

- programs de-bureaucratize school systems by moving to school-based management and allowing schools to opt out of local school systems (United Kingdom) or to be managed by community elected boards of governors (New Zealand).

- job corps, community service experience, etc. in United States.

- pay older youth who attend high school, especially if low income, in Australia,

- German apprenticeship programs in 350 areas; United Kingdom and Australia apprenticeship in 20 - 30 more general areas.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

- funding of private agencies (voluntary and private for profit) to invent and operate alternative education environments, more holistic (e.g., Upward Bound) but committed to productive enterprise.

- try more things in Canada that are being tried elsewhere; in Ontario, at least, the educational system seems too rigid (e.g., strict lines between secondary, community college, and university).

- need to tailor programs to submerge — young women, native peoples, ethno-cultural groups.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

- develop a consistent set of indicators of inputs and outputs for data collection on existing and trial projects; conduct cost /effectiveness studies; and provide thorough descriptions of actual programs.

- ensure that standard measures don't force programs into standard molds; a variety of programs offer the best opportunity of success. Many general skills (e.g., problem-solving) can be learned in a variety of settings.

- emphasize learning values / attitudes, along with knowledge and skills.

- ensure programs provide support for overcoming frustration, for solving problems, and for appropriate behavior.

- ensure programs are linked to others so that there is ease of movement to other learning environments.

Ken Leithwood
Centre for Leadership Development
Department of Educatoinal Administration
OISE

I begin with the assumption that proposals for restructuring may arise from several sources, for example:

- dissatisfaction with the employability of secondary school graduates;
- disengagement from secondary schools by significant numbers of students;
- perceptions of faculty that increasing numbers of students entering university are unprepared to meet the normal standards of scholarship;
- claims by those sensitive to the consequences for schools of trends shaping our futures, that schools are aiming at the wrong targets.

The perspectives accompanying each of these sources lead to sometimes unique insights about the meaning of restructuring. I believe that this is productive and that all credible sources giving rise to restructuring proposals should be carefully explored. In that vein, my subsequent remarks begin to explore insights for restructuring emerging from yet another source, cognitive sciences (constructivist) views of learning.

Cognitive Science's Views of Learning

In a nutshell, what the cognitive sciences have proposed, as a consequence of the past decade of research, is a model of learning based on the construction of personal meaning, often in a social context. Such meaning making depends on the learner searching through his or her store of propositional and procedural knowledge structures for resources to help in solving problems he or she faces and to help better understand the educational challenges being posed by the school or by the environment more generally. Existing knowledge structures may be fully sufficient to make sense of new stimuli or they may need to be adapted or extended for meaning to occur. Meaning is also developed as connections are made between previously unrelated knowledge structures.

This view of the learning process defines "intelligence" as a highly malleable concept and one defined largely by a person's capacity to solve problems. In this context, a problem exists when a person perceives a gap between the current state and goal state, and is not entirely sure about how that gap can be reduced. It is this perception of a gap that energizes or motivates a person to learn, as well: social cognitive explanations of motivation are based on the individual's internalized goals, needs and aspirations. But it is the evaluation of a discrepancy between what one is able to do and what one needs to do to accomplish one's goals, needs and aspirations

that energizes problem-solving activity or learning. expertise (or intelligence) is a function of the amount and organization of the learner's problem-relevant knowledge and the processes brought to bear on its use.

The link between this general conception of learning and questions posed about the education of secondary students begins to become more evident in considerations of the role of the "situation" in which the learner must use his or her knowledge. Research on practical problem solving makes much of how the problem solver uses the situation and the importance of possessing "conditionalized" knowledge. Expertise is defined by the capacity of the individual to respond competently in such situations as may be represented in schools or workplace contexts. Indeed, conceptions of "situated cognition" provide justification for considering the development of knowledge which is useful in solving practical problems as essentially an apprenticeship process.

In sum, then, there is a body of theory about the nature of human learning which suggests, for example, that experiences contribute to learning when they:

1. build directly on the cognitive resources already possessed by the learner;

2. acknowledge, as points of departure, the internalized goals of the learner in making the case for why learning tasks are important;

3. situate the acquisition of new knowledge in contexts which are most like the contexts in which that knowledge is subsequently to be used by the learner;

4. develop such useful knowledge by confronting student with the need to solve authentic problems with assistance through apprenticeship-like relationships with facilitators.

Consequences for Schools

The traditional school has been organized for the purpose of "batch processing" students and is premised on a model of learning which is, at worst, entirely passive and at best essentially behavioristic. This model of learning and the schools built around it pay minimal attention to how knowledge becomes meaningful and, in particular, how to avoid leaving the student with knowledge which is essentially inert. Secondary schools in particular can be accused of demanding that students acquire large bodies of essentially inert knowledge.

The cognitive sciences view of learning, describe above, implies some of the following qualities for schools:

1. the goals of the school will resonate directly with the internalized goals, needs and aspirations of students in the school;

2. the school curriculum will be organized around tasks that re viewed by students (and

probably the wider world) as authentic or real (authentic tasks are also highly motivating);

3. the role of the teacher is to facilitate the student in solving the problem represented by the authentic task;

4. situations that are likely to provide the most suitable circumstances for acquiring useful knowledge will often lie offside the boundaries of what we now think of as school buildings. Some settings might be workplace settings but they might also be any number of other real life settings; the implication, however, is that the structure of the school, designed for batch processing, will have to give way to multiple different structures which permit flexible involvement of students in authentic situations. I've appended a short story which helps illustrate several of these implications.

A Concluding Note

There are of course many other implications for the redesign of educational experiences for students which I have not addressed here. But this will give some idea of how contemporary conceptions of learning lead to very different views of the kinds of experiences, organizations and structures which are likely to facilitate that learning. While many restructuring movements across North America make respectful nods at this new conception of learning, few of the restructuring proposals come close to offering the radically different conception of education actually contained within such a conception of learning.

Appendix

My colleague, Otto Bassier, sent me an article written almost 50 years ago (Corey, 1944) that provides an informative contrast between learning in formal, decontextualized settings versus learning in meaningful apprenticeship contexts. Entitled *Poor Scholar's Soliloquy"*, the article provides a personal account of a student (we'll call him Bob) who is not very good in school and had to repeat the seventh grade. Many would write Bob off as having "low aptitude for learning". But when you look at the kinds of learning that Bob is capable of achieving outside of school, you get a very different impression of his abilities.

One part of Bob's soliloquy discusses the fact that the teachers don't like him because he doesn't read the kind of books that the teachers value. The favorite books he uses include Popular Science, the Mechanical Encyclopedia and the Sear's and Ward's catalogs. Bob uses his books in the context of pursuing meaningful goals. He says of his books: "But I don't just sit down and read them through like they make us do in school. I use my books when I want to find something out, like whenever Mom buys anything second had I look it up in Sear's or Ward's first and tell her if she's getting stung or not" (p. 219).

A little later, Bob explains the trouble he had memorizing the names of the president. He know some of them like Washington and Jefferson but there were 30 altogether and he never did get them all straight. He seems to have a poor memory. Then he talks about the three trucks his uncle owns and the fact that he knows the horsepower and number of forward and backward gears of 26 different American trucks — many of them diesels. Then he states: "it's funny how that Diesel works. I started to tell my teacher about it last Wednesday in science class when the pump we were using to make a vacuum i a bell jar got hot, but she said she didn't see what a Diesel engine had to do with our experiment on air pressure so I just kept still. The kids seemed interested, though" (p. 219).

Bob discusses other area of his schooling like his inability to do the kinds of (arbitrary) word problems found in the textbooks. Yet he helps his uncle solve all kinds of complex trip-planning problems when they travel together. Bob also discusses the bills and letters he sends to the farmers whose livestock is hauled by his uncle and notes that, according to his aunt, he made only three mistakes in his last 17 letters — all of them commas. Then he says: "I wish I could write school themes that way. The last one I had to write was on 'What a Daffodil Thinks of Spring', and I just couldn't get going" (p. 220).

Bob ends his soliloquy by noting that, according to his Dad, he can quit school at the age of 15 and he feels like he should. After all, he's not getting any younger and there is a lot of stuff for him to learn.

Bob's soliloquy is as relevant to the 1990's as it was to the 1940's. It highlights the fact that many students seem to learn effectively in the context of authentic, real life activities yet have great difficulty learning in the decontextualized, arbitrary-task

atmosphere of schools. Luckily for Bob's children, the emphasis on situated cognition is raising serious questions about typical school curricula and tasks (e.g., Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989; Collins et al. in Means book, CTGV, 1991).

Excerpted from: J. Bransford (in press). "Who ya gonna call?" In P. Hallinger, K. Leithwood and J. Murphy (eds.). Cognitive Perspectives on Educational Leadership. New York: Teachers College Press.

Sam Lim
Communications and Strategic Planning
British Columbia Ministry of Education

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

- The lack of a national set of stated expectations for learners as they progress through school and make transitions to work or post secondary education.

- Canada's education system could improve its standards, particularly as one moves east. The recent Economic Council of Canada's report suggests the east-west "tilt" — the propensity for performance in the west to be higher than in the east — in almost all areas of education performance, is a national concern.

- Increasing immigration and the growth of multicultural communities suggests potential difficulties in educating people to be literate in the two national languages — or at the least, suggests the need for extensive ESL programs, particular in urban centres.

- Canadian private-sector employees spend less on training their employees than many foreign counterparts.

- Canada does not have a well-developed system to teach skills during the school-to-work transition period: students not going to post-secondary education are not well-prepared in our schools of today.

- The unwillingness, lack of foresight, or inability of educators to apply technology to the formal process of learning, and to extend the school into the workplace and larger community; or bring the community into the school.

- Federal off-loading to the provinces, which means less money available at the provincial level for education.

- Funding, programming, governance of First Nations' education programs; Francophone programs; also, protection of cultural rights in mainstream education programs.

- The incongruency between programs, materials and processes employed in the schools and the individual's requirements for life (i.e., education has not kept pace with emerging information, technological, societal and career developments demands).

- The effect of retention and failure in the early years of learners' educational programs (increasing the likelihood of learners to "fail" in later years), and the need to develop learning programs for each individual child in which they can experience success.

- The need to encourage young adults to stay in school. Traditional schools presume the learner, rather than the system, is at fault and attempts to counsel them accordingly (rather than realize structural and organizational changes in the system itself are required).

- The effect of a fluctuating economy (which causes varying numbers of school leavers depending on how many job opportunities are available). This causes shifts in the type of learners for which schools must organize. Also, the shift to an "information age" economy rather than a resource based one means the types of skills required of students are very different today.

- The lack of jurisdiction and transition for learners among ministries responsible for elementary-secondary and post-secondary education in regard to adult and continuing education students, including young adults.

- The propensity of some young adult learners to move in and out of formal education.

- The attractiveness and effect (gloss) of emerging information technologies (video, etc.), which are more appealing to young adults.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

- In British Columbia, a process of education renewal is underway (commonly referred to as the Year 2000 Program). This includes new approaches to:

    - the learning process and the learner-educator relationship
    - new educational programs
    - new curricular and resource materials
    - new evaluation and reporting strategies
    - school/community relationships and
    - an embracing of information technologies as important resources and facilitators of that changed relationship.

  An important element are activities designed to address problems faced in educating young adults (including causes which occur much earlier in the educational process).

- In British Columbia, several school districts have initiated specialized strategies (some as part of the Stay in School Initiative) to try and address some of these problems — including the use of computer-based learning programs, special identification and counseling programs for at-risk students, school-community locally developed programs, etc.

- In British Columbia, the British Columbia Human Resource Development Project (under the auspices of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology) is investigating new approaches to formal and informal education and training, particularly as its effects young adults.

- The *Link File Project* in British Columbia is attempting to create an information infrastructure that will coordinate knowledge of education effects between the K-12 and post-secondary environments.

- In British Columbia, at least two studies have recently been completed related to the concept of "adult education" in British Columbia, including the education of young adults.

- Nationally, the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) and the Canadian Education Statistics Program (CESP) are both intended to provide appropriate information and evidence about the nature of this problem (among several faced in education).

- Nationally, the Stay in School Initiative is intended to help address one of the most significant problems faced in educating young adults.

- Nationally, several initiatives (such as the recently published work of the Economic Council of Canada, the recently publicized work of the Conference Board of Canada, and Statistics Canada's literacy, numeracy and school leavers surveys) are all concerned with these problems.

- there are myriad board, committees and task forces currently in operation which are somehow dealing with this issue — at the local, organizational, provincial and national level.

- Almost all provincial jurisdictions are conducting various levels of reviews of their education systems.

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

- Numerous initiatives with the concept of :choice" in the United States e.g.,

    - Milwaukee's pioneer choice plan (allows parents to use state money to pay for private school tuition)

    - Pennsylvania's voucher program — proposed $900 voucher to any parent in the state who wants to send a child to a private or public school outside the child's district

    - Minnesota's magnet schools.

- Move toward national testing in the United States promoted by the federal administration (National Education Goals Panel, National Council of Education Standards and Testing) — which is still a source of significant debate in terms of what is to be tested, how, and is opposed by the National PTA and the National Education Association.

- School restructuring initiatives in California, Chicago, Massachusetts, and other AMerican states.

- Privatization of the school inspectorate in England, in which most of its functions will be handed over to private companies, made up of lay people as well as education experts.

- Breaking the power of the education establishment in England: opting out clause, and LEAS being slimed down as all schools start to manage their own budgets and some choose to become grant-maintained.

- Examination reforms in England, and the new Parent's Charter that will empower parents by making all schools publish their examination results and truancy rates.

- Kienbaum report in Germany — a scrutiny of the education system by an independent management consultant, to determine whether education could be made more efficient.

- "School of the air" in Australia, long distance education via mail and radio link-ups for remote areas; Mexico also studying technology in education and the role of television.

- Home-school computer linkages in Singapore, in which students and parents can communicate directly with the school via a home-based computer. It includes communication of homework assignments, etc.

- Some of the best education initiatives, as determined by *Newsweek* magazine:

New Zealand	Time and process devoted to reading — half day for first few years, comprehension rather than rote drills, and grouping.
Italy	Early childhood education — Diana School of Reggio Emilia
Netherlands	Mathematics instruction, "Realistic math", Language education.
Japan	Science education, "Technology based science"
United States	Arts, Pittsburgh's innovative PROPEL Program, University Science and Engineering University Graduate Programs.
Germany	Trade and vocational training: high school apprenticeship program, Teacher Training
Sweden	Adult Education

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

- School/district improvement schemes, in which performance indicators are negotiated and well-understood; in which schools/districts devise, in partnership with their communities five year plans for growth based on those indicators; and funding for schools is a function of performance on those indicators. Funding could be linked to a systematic process of evaluation and strategic planning, supported through funds made available by government and private companies.

- corporation/community sponsored secondary schools — schools that are collaboratively funded by: local municipalities, *all* social services Ministries that deliver services to young people between the ages of 16 - 20; and corporations that have a large stake in a community's education program.

- School districts as administrative units, but not based on geographical areas, but on cultural and language common interests, and linked together by technological networks e.g., Francophone School Districts).

- Construct "information technology megaprojects" in which hard and software consortiums are developed, and supported by government, linking secondary schools, colleges, universities, municipal libraries, other related ministries with corporate businesses with a research and development component in information technology. These consortiums might develop education technology that creates lessons that "simulate" real-world problem solving situations devoted to teaching the kinds of skills demanded by today's world, and links them to authentic and performance assessment innovations being developed in many jurisdictions, seek ways to deliver that technology to the classroom.

  These skills are outlined in British Columbia's Year 2000 document, and supported by numerous studies i.e., Economic Council of Canada Study, Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in the United States, etc.

- "Community schools", in which students are linked electronically via computer networks and come together to a central area in the community only for social learning experiences. Each students — between the age of 16 - 20 — would also have a personalized education program, a component of which would be a cooperative work placement with a community business or agency. Each individual child would have a tutor who travels to their home, to assist with the monitoring of their personalized education program. The institution of school as we traditionally view it i.e., a building, would be replaced by an administrative unit, and the school would become part of the fabric of the local community.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

- Gain a clear understanding as to expected results — on a national and provincial and local level — by undertaking extensive consultation with community groups and gaining negotiated agreement on education standards. Develop performance indicators for any and all program so that effectiveness of those program scan be evaluated from the perspective of the client/users, as well as the academic perspective.

- Establish a national "research and evaluation consortium" in which are Canadian provinces would have evaluation and research centres, located at a university, with the responsibility to link research agendas throughout provinces and Canada. Support them through dedicated funds, and establish province and school evaluative and planning programs — systematic ones — that build research knowledge into school growth plans. Use the "negotiated results" mentioned above as the basis by which to judge various options that are tried.

  Gain support and participation from the community and private sector, so that the education agenda does not escape the needs of the larger community, and in fact, is responsive to it.

- Negotiate "Evaluation Review Frameworks" that synthesize the needs of various partners in the delivery of education services and that will establish parameters for the collection, interpretation, and use of information for system improvement i.e., the British Columbia Primary Program Evaluation Framework.

- Establish information infrastructures that will support regular evaluation and research activities, by providing the basic data required to operationalize them — similar to the British Columbia *Link File*, but a national version of this project.

- Establish national/provincial schools of education administration that highlight:

  - information technology and management
  - evaluation and research skills in the school setting
  - strategic planning

  and that bring business and education leaders to gather to talk about effective management, human resource development, and entrepreneurial strategies.

- Encourage Ministries or Departments of Education to restructure themselves to coordinate the networking of innovative practices, and encourage innovative practices at the local level, within a common framework of education standards. Free up the opportunity for people to experiment with process, and communicate findings through a broad-based research network established nationally.

- Longitudinal studies that follow early develop as well as formal implementation, e.g., British Columbia Curriculum reform research.

Gary McCulloch
Department of Educational Research
Lancaster University, England

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

A useful way of measuring the problems that Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20, certainly of keeping them in proportion, is to compare them with those of the United Kingdom. The post-16 sector in the United Kingdom has been described as "one of the most disorganized and fragmented in the world" (Green, 1991), characterized by an "*ad hoc*, uncontrolled and largely unmonitored extension of provision" (Reid, 1991). Successive policy initiatives in this area over the past 30 years have failed to overcome inherited structural and cultural weaknesses, and have in many ways served to increase the confusions and divisions involved. It seems crucial that new policies in the 16 - 20 education sector in Canada should strive to learn from the failures of the British and at least the most obvious of their mistakes and problems.

My initial perception of Canada's problems in this area is that it shares with other western nations an uncertainty of purpose in its provision. Faith in the liberal mission of schooling has generally declined since the 1960s, and yet there has been little in the way of a new rationale or purpose to take its place as we approach the 21st century. In this philosophical vacuum there has grown the temptation to go for the "technical fix", an impulse to approach specific or identified "problems" in isolation from each other and without reference to cultural or historical issues and roots. This kind of temptation would therefore be one of the "problems" to be faced; the education of youth aged 16 to 20 needs to be addressed not simply in "technical" terms, nor even in terms of listing specific problems, but as cultural, political and historical issues and in relation to the purposes and aims of provision.

A further general problem of the 16 - 20 sector in education is that it involves a basic tension between ideals of "further education" (usually involving a vocational emphasis for particular groups) and those of "higher education", which tends to lead in turn to contradictions in terms of culture and the expectations of social class and gender groups. An important issue is how to reconcile or combine these competing traditions. Within these parameters my understanding of the Canadian situation is that there is a growing awareness of the need to cater for difference cultural and language minorities, and of the importance of reducing the "dropout" rate so that a higher proportion of the age range can participate in education and training between the ages of 16 and 20.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

I am not aware of any initiatives taken in Canada to address what I would see as the key global problem of the crisis of purpose as it relates to 16 - 20 education. Thomas Fleming's recent paper (1991) seems an interesting starting point for discussion of this issue in the Canadian context. Lawton and Leithwood (1991) and Gedge (1991) also offer instructive perspectives on language issues and the dropout problem which seem to suggest continuing uncertainty rather than decisive remedies.

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

A wide range of initiatives have been developed in the United Kingdom many of which, taken in isolation, appear useful but which often tend to reinforce and aggravate existing social, cultural and historical tendencies. A similar phenomenon seems to exist elsewhere, for example in New Zealand.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

Developing a greater understanding of the historical context and purposes of 16 - 20 education and developing provision on this basis is an approach that has received little tangible support over the past generation, but which deserves greater consideration.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

The various options and initiatives should not be assessed in isolation, but rather with reference to the surrounding culture, economy, and society — that is, not technical fixes but in cultural and historical terms. The priorities, assumptions and ideologies that underlie such options / initiatives need also to be understood in order for us to begin to assess their character.

Keith Newton
Senior Research Officer
Economic Council of Canada

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

- drop-out rate unacceptable
- poor balance of emphasis between programs for the academically inclined 30% who aspire to post-secondary and the 70% who don't
- poor image of vocational offerings
- inadequate counselling leads to poor school work transition and aimless dabbling in the labour market
- 20% functional illiteracy and 44% innumeracy of 16 - 24 year-olds (Stas Can Survey) is worrisome
- no time to teach: teachers have to be spiritual guides, dieticians, social workers, sexologists.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

- CEIC's stay-in-school initiative
- an array of programs to address illiteracy
- Conference Board's program to encourage "partnerships" between schools and the corporate sector.

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

- UK targets of 90% (?) of all high school children in coop programs by 2000.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

- establishment of national goals and standards.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

- greater coordination — possibly national body
- CMEC/OISE/CLFDB/CLMPC/AUCC/CAUT/CTF/etc. plus other stakeholders to forge national consensus.

Cecilia Reynolds
Brock University

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

Traditional gender expectations held by students, parents, teachers, school counselors, school administrators and many employers limit course choices and career options explored by both female and male students.

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

- Canadian Teachers Federation study *A Capella*.
- National Film Board — *The Famine Within*.
- University of Western Ontario — *Chilly Climate* video.
- Nova Scotia Women's Directorate — Inventory of educational activities focusing on girls and young women in science and math.
- University program re Women and Science (e.g., Trent, Brock, University of Toronto) for 16 year olds.
- Women Inventors Group (conferences, videos, newsletters).
- Media literacy programs in many secondary schools.
- Numerous special programs for female students (e.g., Ms. Math, Career Days).

3. What initiatives are you aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

At international conferences I have heard about several initiatives similar to those in Canada which have been and are being undertaken in other countries. Among these are three that I have a particular interest in:

- The New Jersey Project (United States)
- Classroom climate research and activities in Israel
- Initiation of women's Studies as a discipline in Thailand.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

- Women's studies courses as "teachable subjects" for Faculty of Education acceptance.

- Courses on gender and education for B.Ed., M.Ed., and doctoral student sin education.
- Women's studies courses and content encouraged for male and female students in elementary and secondary schools.

- Focus workshops and conferences for Guidance personnel re gender, school and employment issues.

- Work with media literacy groups in exploring ways to involve students of various backgrounds in critical thinking about gender related issues such as violence, teenage sexuality, etc.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

- Consider resources required to initiate and support option.

- What range of students will be affected (e.g., class and ethnic backgrounds, achievement levels, gender)?
- How long would implementation take?

- How long would effects of initiative be felt?

- What backlash or resistances might be expected?

John Wiens
Seven Oaks School Division No. 10

(Please allow me some latitude in responding to the five guiding questions. My presumption in requesting this latitude is driven by a sense that there are some unresolved, contentious aspects in the underlying premises behind the workshop. Firstly, the emphasis on alternative and restructured learning environments raises questions of significant complexity — what is the role of the learner is such environment and what environmental aspects contribute to learning? Secondly, can environments "lead" or do they "contribute" to learning? My initial fears are the conventionally accepted, seemingly linear, cause-effect disposition of the vocabulary. Thirdly, and most contentious is the question of "successful educational programs" — what is deemed as educational and what is deemed as success?)

1. What is your perception of the problems Canada faces in the education of youth aged 16 to 20?

- A negative public portrayal of education by those outside and inside the "education system" is more likely to stymie attempts to improve education than to assist in improvement.

- The people driving / informing the educational enterprise have neither acknowledged, made explicit, or attempted to reconcile the various purposes of schooling — socialization, custodial care, training and education.

- The assumption that those purposes can somehow be dealt with in isolation from each other — currently the focus is on the training aspects of schooling, not an "integrated" notion encompassing all purposes.

- This suggest that we still believe we can dis "integrate" a person's life, and through predominantly external means, achieve "success" in external goals.

- I contend there is no meaningful objective definition of education, let alone success.

- This dis "integration" is exacerbated by the fact that the traditional external rewards no longer exist — a job upon graduation, a career spanning adulthood.

- Add to this the lack of faith in and antipathy to our public institutions, the stress caused by a country like Canada not being able any longer to manage its own house because of internal, as well as external forces.

- Perhaps, the biggest problem is that Grade 12 or 13, at whatever age this is achieved, is still viewed as a goal rather than a step on the journey — does government's responsibility for most students' education end at the end of Grade 12 or 13?; do many view this schooling

to end here as a result of this notion?

2. What initiatives are you aware of that have been taken in Canada to address this problem?

- Virtually every school and school district in Canada have undertaken initiatives to keep children in school until the end of Grade 12, reduce absenteeism and dropouts — there are a myriad of alternative, vocational, and work education programs in Canadian schools as well as a multitude of motivational and support programs for students'; psycho-emotional well-being; and they all "work" for some students.

- Employment and Immigration has supported and sponsored a variety of programs for this age-group of students — they are hampered somewhat by two key requirements: quick success and eventual withdrawal of financial support — many have been successful for the students who have been able to participate while they were operating in their early stages (I can share many with the group).

- Therefore, I would dispute the assumption that nothing or very little is happening for these students.

- I would also question whether centralized, standardized responses will be more successful — certainly they may appear technically justifiable and reasonable; but they may very well be less responsive.

- Of particular concern to me is the television commercial featuring the "dropout in the phone booth" wishing he had "stayed in school" — "blaming the victims" may serve some purposes but suggesting that he can't acquire a job simply because he didn't stay in school is akin to misrepresentation — these types of initiatives make us in school systems and our student suspicious about the governments' purposes and cynical about their intents.

3. What initiatives are ycu aware of in other nations or provinces that reflect similar concerns?

- As in our discussion in Canada, initiatives tend to be based on the questionable assumptions / definitions that characterize the criticism.

- They range from extreme decentralization (Chicago) to various forms of centralization (Britain-Australia; United States national goals; CMEC discussion).

- They are still largely technocratic responses to curriculum, teaching, and accountability which serve more to strengthen the educational "haves" at the expense of the "have-nots" be they provinces, school districts, schools, or students.

4. What possible initiatives would you suggest that, as far as you know, have not yet been tried?

- There are not many I can think of that have not been tried at the national, or provincial level (within the distribution of rights and powers between levels of government).

- Ongoing, resource support for already well-conceived local initiatives which have failed due to lack of resources.

- There are two initiatives which we think are helpful at the local level:

    - engaging as many people as possible in the discussion about the purposes, the causes, and the implications of education (an intense dialogue informed by research and theory as well as by experience

    - developing and sustaining a data base and *research* effort.

5. How can we assess the various options, decide which options should be tried, and assess initiatives undertaken?

- An ongoing dialogue which does not shut out the educational community (there exists no particular intentional complicity to undermine the good work of government, business, and industry) — education is such a complex, contextual, normative activity that it requires continuous dialogue for shared understandings, and intents; and the outcomes will always remain somewhat idiosyncratic, somewhat uncertain and unpredictable; actions are to some extent "best guesses" and "leaps of faith" as a result.

- I need to be convinced that national efforts can do more than encourage and support.

- I'm not sure how to discount options that people believe in and that fit within an overriding framework of shared beliefs, values, and understandings.

- They must be assessed by prior, simultaneous, and subsequent "research" efforts -- here we could learn from scientific research -- our "educational political culture" does not encourage, perhaps even tolerate, longitudinal research and widespread consideration of the results — "there is no developed educational research community."

- I love the "purpose" of this workshop.

APPENDIX IV

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APPENDIX V

Small Groups

INVITATIONAL RESEARCH WORKSHOP ON RESTRUCTURED AND ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

SMALL GROUPS

Group 1

Antoine Baby
George Dei
Denis Haché
Helen Hackett
Linda LaRocque
Sam Lim
Cecilia Reynolds
Tom Tidey

Group 2

Roland Case
Janet Eaton
Dick Harvey
John Jalsevac
Steve Lwton
Ken Leithwood
Virginia Miller
Keith Newton
Ted Wall

Group 3

Ivor Goodson
Johnb Greenwood
Andy Hargreaves
Doris Jantzi
Gary McCulloch
Burle Summers
John Weins